

Cook County Assessor Major IT Projects Report – April 2024

Background

The Cook County Assessor is an elected government official who is responsible for establishing fair and accurate property assessments. Valuation of the county's 1.8 million parcels of property is conducted for ad valorem tax purposes. Ad valorem means according to value and refers to the amount of taxes that will be required to be paid based on the value of the property.

To administer this task, the Assessor reassesses one-third of the properties located in the county each year. The Assessor alternates assessments among the northern suburbs, the southern and western suburbs and the City of Chicago.

Mission

The mission of the Cook County Assessor's Office is to deliver accurate and transparent assessments of all residential and commercial properties. We serve every community in the County through ethical stewardship within the property tax system. The Assessor's Office's vision for this work emphasizes data integrity, teamwork culture, and distinguished service while adhering to our values of fairness, transparency and ethics.

April 2023 Technology and Innovation Committee Update

Integrated Property Tax System (iasWorld)

Integrated Property Tax System (iasWorld) Online filings was expanded in 2023 to include all current available homestead exemptions and exempt properties, of which substantial enhancements were made for 2024. Online Certificate of Error Filing for exemptions was also available to coincide with the 2022 2nd installment tax bill mailing; this is a transition away from a stand-alone vendor to our current assessment system of record.

The Residential Data Collection team performed all necessary building permit inspections entirely in the Field Mobile application; this allowed for immediate transmission/receipt of data and inspection results directly from the field.

Illinois Department of Revenue sales validation will be performed in iasWorld and in IDOR's myDec system for recorded sales. Validating these sales regularly will ensure the assessment models used by the office will have the best possible data with which to estimate the values of residential property.

A BETA release for Public Access allowing public users to create inquiries is anticipated to be in production by late November 2024. Township Assessors and Commissioners will be first in line to help test and provide feedback on its functionality.

The Assessor is also in partnership with the other property tax offices for the Phase 2 iasWorld implementation to ensure a smooth and successful transition from legacy systems and maintain the County's operational continuity. Once this implementation is complete, we will no longer have a dependence on the mainframe (assessments were moved off the mainframe in 2021). This phase includes complete processing of exemptions and critical dependencies with the Clerk and Treasurer's Office, who are expected to Go-Live in 2024.

The Assessor also worked with the Board of Review to build a direct data interface between iasworld and Board of Review's appeal processing system for 2023. The Assessor's Office was able to transmit towns both directly to BOR and through the pre-existing legacy interface.

Customer Service

Targeted messaging via the GovDelivery platform was deployed in FY202. Taxpayers can now sign up to be notified by email and text message for various news and deadlines for their property's reassessment, appeal, and exemption information.

The Assessor Office will continue to work to improve customer service with a focus on developing more ways to engage taxpayers and property owners. CCAO will explore possibilities of omni-channel or multi-channel customer support to include online chat and SMS text messaging.

The website will undergo a usability and experience review. A focus will be on the property details page which is the most visited page on the website and delivers information on each PIN.

Data Center

Assessor's office will be implementing new nodes to the DMZ (public facing servers) and backup locations for increased capacity and efficiency of business operations.

Security

Scope and planning for project to install Genetec security cameras at 118N Clark and courthouses in Bridgeview, Markham and Skokie has been completed in conjunction with BOT and county facilities teams. Installation to begin in summer 2024.

Productivity

Assessor is investing in better project management and service desk tools to achieve our goals and objectives efficiently and effectively. These tools will be used to improve intake, collaboration, organization and manage resources for all projects.